



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

long run; that is to say, if repeated often enough, I should receive on the average a hundred dollars at each trial. But if the trial were to be made but once, I should infinitely prefer the second alternative, on account of its greater security. Mere certainty is worth a great deal. We wish to know our fate. How much it is worth is a question of political economy. It must go into the market, where its worth is what it will fetch. And since security may be of many kinds (according to the distribution of the probabilities of each sum of money and of each loss, in prospect), the value of the various kinds will fluctuate among one another with the ratio of demand and supply, — the demand varying with the moral and intellectual state of the community, — and thus no single and constant number can represent the value of any kind.

12.—*France and England in North America, a Series of Historical Narratives.* By FRANCIS PARKMAN, Author of "History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac," "Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life," &c. Part Second. *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. 1867. pp. lxix., 463.

It is not always that the word "Series" on a title-page, any more than the "To be continued" at the end of the monthly instalment of a story, may be said to produce cheerful emotions in the breast of the conscientious reader. As boys are taught at boarding-schools, with abiding thoroughness, the perhaps unnecessary lesson to leave nothing on their plates, so there are certain readers, certain reviewers even, who have learned somewhere, or are driven by a fatal tyranny of nature, to make clean work of whatever book they fall foul of, down to the last consoling crumb of *Finis* at the end of the appendix. That solemn word which the printer, with a kind of grim humor, sets up like the headstone of many a book departed from the mind so soon as read, and never to return except in nightmare, gives an assurance of present safety that is delicious. The albatross has at last dropped from the neck. But a colophon which has not that definite brevity, which merely indicates the end of a particular volume, leaves readers of the turn we have mentioned in a dreadful condition of doubt and apprehension, — of doubt as to how much may yet remain, of apprehension lest their task may survive them. We know some who have become involved in the endless coils of the "Rebellion Record," and are wellnigh desperate in consequence. They began it full of hope in 1861, and 1867 finds them still climbing that Piranesi staircase whose landing is lost in abysmal space. They cannot read in the paper that there is promise

of a great crop of cereals, without turning pale at the identity of sound that recalls their serfdom. They fly to Europe, hoping that when they return they may know precisely how much is expected of them, but find at home the inevitable number, ending with fiendish indefiniteness in the midst of a sentence. It is an excellent work, — but *quousque tandem?* Even Mr. Froude begins to excite well-founded forebodings, and all the grandchildren of our Revolutionary heroes are studying the tables of life insurance to find out Mr. Bancroft's chance of reaching the year 1781, and theirs of being able to answer him.

We confess that we belong to this class of conscientious readers who reckon themselves pledged to the book they have begun, but we should need no such spur in Mr. Parkman's case; for his volumes, while they give us a healthy appetite for what is to follow, have the advantage that each is complete in itself. In the volume before us he tells, with the power which only sympathy and the vividness which nothing but a mastery of minute detail can give, the story of the Jesuit missions in Canada. Their attempt failed, as all others have failed whose object was to moor the New World to the Old, and to plant the Past in a soil so unkindly that it could never have struck out roots there, and would at best be but a sapless tradition. Some European plants thrive better here than at home; but the Church in its hierarchical sense is not one of them, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. There is, however, in the defeat of an heroic effort, where it is not the men, but the means, that fail, something that stirs the soul more than success. Whatever other short-comings there may be, the heroism always succeeds. To us, also, a spiritual soldiery, like the Jesuits, has an interest that we seek vainly in the achievements of merely physical warfare. We need no maps, no study of the localities, to understand *their* battles, for the fields where they were fought, the cunning and prowess of the enemy, are familiar to us all. If the means which these men used were sometimes sordid, often more than questionable, their object was certainly a noble one. It is well for us to remember that Authority no less than Liberty has had its martyrs, noble men who thought it worth dying for. These also, as truly as the others, represented a Divine principle, and the time may be nearer than we think when liberty misunderstood shall make such sacrifice as they made for the sake of the past, a duty for those who would secure the safety of the future. The contest between the English and French systems on this continent was inevitable, and was not merely an accident of war between the parent countries, for France represented reaction and England progress. The result of it is certainly not a thing to be regretted by any right-thinking man, but we should be unworthy of

victory if we did not admire and celebrate the courage of those who died for a cause that was always hopeless, and perhaps the dearer to them for being so. When we remember Father Rasles and the fierce horror which our ancestors felt for that black militia of Rome, there is something that touches the imagination in the fact that their story should be first told in English by a descendant of the Puritans.

And the story is told remarkably well, for Mr. Parkman is capable of enthusiasm as well as patient of research. It has an interest, too, which we often miss in the history of greater events, because the characters are so few that we become acquainted with them all, and our sympathies do not lose themselves in a crowd of half-familiar figures. Here the tragedy has something of Greek simplicity in the directness of its movement and the fewness of the chief actors. Mr. Parkman also makes us thoroughly acquainted with the mental and physical traits of his leading personages, so that we read with that liveliness and intelligence of attention with which we follow the adventures of people we have seen and known. There is singular fascination in a book that enables us to re-create for ourselves that world, so recent in time, so far off in fact, with its gloom of primeval forest, its sombre recesses of virgin silence, with here and there a patch of life, a glimpse of motion, as the Iroquois steals upon his victim, or the black-robed priest paces, telling his beads, along the scarce-distinguishable wood-path. No subject could entice the imagination more than this, as we walk with the Jesuits this realm of perpetual newness and expectation, this true conjuring-ground of untrammelled fancy. Not a stream but flowed out of dream-land to lose itself in dream-land again; not a lake but stretched towards infinite conjecture and unravished possibility. And then that breathless solitude of snow, when Nature made retreat into her nunnery of winter and silence, muffled half a continent! Human eyes will look on no such world again, — a world unpropertied, a world in the block, to be shaped into whatsoever ideal form. The first European adventurers into the Orient bring us news from fairy-land, it is true, but nothing like this. There the imagination is sated: here it is teased with ever-new invitation.

Mr. Parkman has prefaced his volume with a treatise on the aboriginal American, his habits, superstitions, character, and qualities, whose thoroughness leaves nothing to be desired. The substance of it has already given value to our own pages. Having himself studied the living savage, his opinion is entitled to special weight, and we may fairly hope to have seen the last of the sententious Cooper variety of the race. The red man of fiction shrinks into nonentity before the eye of the well-read man of fact. Were this Mr. Parkman's only claim

upon our gratitude, it had been a large one; for to whom should we be more thankful than to him who replaces vagueness with certainty, and compels a braggart falsehood to confess the truth? But the volume before us puts us more largely in his debt. A new and authentic testimony to the strength of the human soul, to the capacity of man for self-devotion and that more difficult heroism which is unwitnessed, is a substantial addition to our self-respect, a positive help toward our deserving it on occasion. We look forward to his next volume with a whetted appetite. There is no passage in our history so romantic as that contest of men fresh from the luxury of the Old World in the savage remoteness of our woods, that grapple of two hostile civilizations in the shaggy recesses of our wilderness, and no historian so competent to deal with it as Mr. Parkman.

13. — *A Song of Italy*. By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1867. 16mo. pp. 47.

DRYDEN, in his dedication to his translation of the *Æneis*, says:—

“Segrais has distinguished the readers of poetry, according to their capacity of judging, into three classes (he might have said the same of writers if he had pleased). In the lowest form he places those whom he calls *les petits esprits*,—such things as our upper-gallery audience in a play-house, who like nothing but the husk and rind of wit, prefer a quibble, a conceit, an epigram, before solid sense and elegant expression. These are mob-readers. If Virgil and Martial stood for Parliament-men, we know already who would carry it. But though they make the greatest appearance in the field, and cry the loudest, the best on it is, they are but a sort of French Huguenots or Dutch boors, brought over in herds, but not naturalized, who have not land of two pounds per annum in Parnassus, and are therefore not privileged to poll. Their authors are of the same level, fit to represent them on a mountebank's stage, or to be masters of the ceremonies in a bear-garden. Yet these are they who have the most admirers. But it often happens, to their mortification, that as their readers improve their stock of sense, (as they may by reading better books, and by conversation with men of judgment,) they soon forsake them; and when the torrent from the mountain falls no more, the swelling writer is reduced into his shallow bed, like the Mancañares at Madrid, with scarce water to moisten his own pebbles. There are a middle sort of readers (as we hold there is a middle state of souls), such as have a further insight than the former, yet have not the capacity of judging right (for I speak not of those who are bribed by a party, and know better if they were not corrupted); but I mean a company of warm young men, who are not yet arrived so far as to discern the difference betwixt fustian, or ostentatious sentences, and the true sublime. These are above liking Martial or Ovid's